



# United States Department of the Interior

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Capital Parks-East  
1900 Anacostia Drive, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20020

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L30 (NPS-NACE RM)

January 26, 2015

Dear Sir or Madam:

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public comments on the proposed Oxon Cove Hiker/Biker Trail segment. This 30-day public scoping effort is the first step in the Environmental Assessment (EA) process NPS is conducting in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1960 (NEPA). The purpose of the public scoping comment period is to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the development of the trail.

NPS proposes to construct a new paved hiker/biker trail system with a small parking lot, a river-access pier, observation deck, new trail links, and associated facilities (e.g., benches, bike racks, signage, and interpretive waysides) in the District of Columbia (D.C.) portion of Oxon Cove Park. The proposed trail would be a hardened surface with a tread width of 10 to 12 feet. Under this initial proposal, the trail would be approximately one mile in length and have connections to Shepherd Parkway (the Civil War Defenses of Washington) and to the existing Oxon Cove Park bike trail (see attached map). The trail would also connect with hiker-biker trail projects underway in the Forest Heights community and with the D.C. Department of Transportation's Oxon Run Trail.

Oxon Cove Park straddles the D.C./Maryland boundary line. There is a paved bicycle trail that has long existed in the park that links D.C. with Oxon Hill, Maryland, the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (Virginia,) and other points south. However, the adjacent 72-acre D.C. portion of Oxon Cove Park (U.S. Reservation 421), located on riverfront, has no trail or other visitor facilities.

The D.C. community, led by the Oxon Run Citizens Alliance (ORCA) and the Ward 8 Councilmember's office, has expressed its strong desire for pedestrian and bicyclist access to Oxon Cove and the Potomac River for river viewing, fishing, boating, and other recreational activities (all of which are currently unavailable in the Ward). Moreover, the D.C. Department of Transportation is also working with that community and the park to explore new hiker-biker trail sections and connections.

As waterfront property on Oxon Cove and the Potomac River, the D.C. portion of Oxon Cove Park offers broad opportunities for improving public recreation through developing appropriate cove and river access, new trails, environmental study areas, and wildlife and river viewing

features. Its location, resources, and history also make it ideal as a destination for several new initiatives such as the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, the Chesapeake Gateways, and Star-Spangled Banner Trail. NPS recognizes Oxon Cove Park's tremendous potential for improved public access and enjoyment of the park's natural resources and scenic values. This trail will highlight the park's streams, wetlands, and forests along the cove providing visitors the opportunity to view wildlife in each of these habitat types.

In accordance with NEPA, the NPS is preparing an EA to evaluate these proposed actions. The EA will address the project background, the purpose and need for the proposed actions, a determination of environmental issues and potential impacts resulting from the alternatives considered (including the no action alternative), and public involvement and agency coordination.

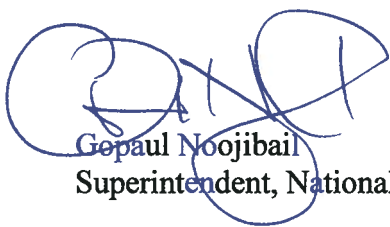
The public is invited to identify any issues or concerns they might have with the proposed project so that the NPS can appropriately consider them in the preparation of the EA. Comments may be submitted online by following the appropriate link at:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/oxcohikerbiker>

If you wish to comment, you may submit them electronically only. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

Thank you for your interest and participation in this process and we appreciate your feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gepaul Noojibail", is written over a circular blue stamp. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract.

Gepaul Noojibail  
Superintendent, National Capital Parks-East

Enclosure: Map of Project Area





## Oxon Cove Park

